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RFB-7341-61

21 DEC 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, DPD-ID/P

SUBJECT: Visit to Helio Aircraft Corporation
6 - 9 December 1961 [redacted]

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1. The purpose of this trip was to coordinate matters concerning the Helio "Twin" with the Helio Aircraft Corporation (HAC). The following comments pertain:

a. The requirements for Helio testing and reporting test results as outlined in Attachment 2 to RFB-7341-61 were coordinated with [redacted]. There were no apparent objections, and [redacted] adjusted the delivery date of the No. 1 aircraft to 20 December 1961 in lieu of 15 December.

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b. FAA was to have sent Mr. Roman Spangler and Mr. Bill Norton to HAC during the period of this visit to fly the No. 1 aircraft and give an opinion on control and stability, particularly during take-off and landing. Only Mr. Norton arrived; the purpose of his visit was to check cockpit visibility. He made one short flight, took a number of pictures, and departed without attempting either a take-off or landing. Mr. Norton could make no official comment, but stated that in his personal opinion cockpit visibility was "OK." It is rumored that FAA recently turned down certification of another new "Twin" due to cockpit visibility.

SECRET

SECRETINFO-7320-61
Page 2

e. Progress and testing are continuing satisfactorily. Weather is a major factor in rate of progress, and HAC is pushing hard during the periods of good weather. This time of year, calm surface wind conditions required for take-off and landing measurements are hard to come by in Massachusetts, thereby restricting flight tests to altitude work most of the time.

4. The operating handbook is being typed in final form. During a discussion on the matter, [redacted] recommended that HAC reproduce copies of the operating, maintenance, and parts manuals by blueprint or equivalent quality process. HAC has this capability and can provide more complete copies by the time No. 1 aircraft is delivered. This would be at a cost of near five dollars a copy versus twenty-five dollars each if reproduced by a more sophisticated manner. This would permit us to incorporate changes and new sections as they are prepared, thereby finalizing each before final printing. It would also give us a better price if HAC delivered the final handbooks for the No. 1 and 2 aircraft at the same time as the handbooks for the follow-on aircraft. The Dornier Do. 27 and Do. 28 handbooks were printed by a blueprint process.

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e. HAC has recommended that a small factory maintenance team accompany No. 1 aircraft for early operational tests. This suggestion has merit and would assist in getting maximum test time and experience on the aircraft during the evaluation period.

f. The twin turbine configuration was discussed briefly to see what thoughts and studies HAC had put into the matter. The problem was basic: availability and cost of engines, reduction gear, and propeller. HAC suggested that we also look into the matter as they, without a Defense Department contract, had no priority for a production engine, but we might be able to borrow a pair from one of the services. Follow-up is intended.

g. HAC has designed a number of changes that will improve buffet characteristics and will conduct wind-tunnel

SECRET

SECRET

DPD-7820-61
Page 3

tests in January to determine which combinations are most desirable. (See Attachment 1 for a look at someone else's problems in the megabucks, then HAC's will not seem so severe.)

2. Conclusions:

- a. HAC's new target date for delivery of the No. 1 Twin is 20 December 1961. Development and testing are progressing satisfactorily. HAC suggested we employ a small factory maintenance team (2 men) during early use of No. 1 aircraft.
- b. Development of buffet fix is progressing well.
- c. DPD will look into availability of turboprop engines and propellers, etc., for further feasibility study toward a more powerful "Twin."

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[Redacted]
Chief, Air Support Branch, DPD-10/P

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[Redacted]
20 December 1961

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